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ABSTRACT

The short stories, poems, and cultural descriptions about American Indians (volume 1 of two) are the result of a combined effort of the 7th grade students of Rice School District (Sacaton, Arizona), their teacher, and the parents and friends of the students of the San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation (Arizona). The 24 student contributors prepared 26 articles on Apache Indians. A short vocabularly of Apache and English words is given at the end of the document. (KM)

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"Songs of the Masked Dancers"

1.
When the earth was made;
When the sky was made;
When my songs were first heard;
The holy mountain was standing toward me with life.
At the center of the sky, the holy boys walks four ways with life.
Just mine, my mountain became; standing toward me with life.
"Gan" children became; standing toward me with life.
When the sun goes down to the earth,
Where Mescal mountain lies with its head toward the sunrise,
Black spruce became; standing up with me.

2.
Right at the center of the sky the holy boy with life walks in four directions.
Lightning with life in four colors comes down four times.
The place which is called black spot in life;
The place which is called blue spot with life;
The place which is called yellow spot with life;
The place which is called white spot with life;
They have heard about me,
The black "Gans" dance in four places,
The sun starts down toward the earth.

3.
The living sky black – spotted;
The living sky blue – spotted;
The living sky yellow – spotted;
The living sky white – spotted;
The young spruce as girls stood up for their dance in the way of life.
When my songs first were, they made my songs with words of jet.
Earth when it was made,
Sky when it was made,
Earth to the end,
Sky to the end,
Black Gan, black thunder, when they came toward each other,
The various bad things that used to be vanished.
The lightning of black thunder struck four times for them.
It struck four times for me.

4.
When first my songs became,
When the sky was made,
When the earth was made,
The breath of the "Gan" on me made only of down,
When they heard about my life;
Where they got their life;
When they heard about me;
It stands.

5.
The day broke with slender rain.
The place which is called "Lightning's water stands,"
The place which is called "Where the dawn strikes,"
Four places where it is called "it dawns with life,"
I land there.
The sky boys, I go among them.
He came to me with long life;
When he talked over my body with the longest life,
The voice of thunder spoke well four times.
Holy sky boy spoke to me four times.
When he talked to me my breath become.

"MOUNTAIN SPIRITS"

Many years ago, the Apache Indian believed that there were "Mountain Spirits" that lived in the highest mountains on the cliffs. Only the "Mountain Spirit" medicine man could call these spirits to come down and dance or help the sick people, and to chase away the evil spirits from them and to bless the people. These spirits, five of them, came down from the mountain in the night and danced over the sick people until 3 or 4 in the morning. These spirits were respected and held sacred even by the medicine man. He taught the people to respect them too. They were told not to make fun of them for fear that it would cause a curse to come upon them, instead of a blessing. But, some of them made fun and did not believe in the spirits. There was no respect for them. Evil, sickness, and even death came upon these people. For fear of the curse of the mountain spirits, the medicine men decided not to call upon the real mountain spirits to come or to dance. So, the change was made. Instead, they made costumes for five men to dress and dance like the mountain spirits. Now all the mountain spirit medicine men are gone.

"APACHE MOUNTAIN SPIRIT DANCE"

There are many ways the mountain spirit dance can be interpreted. One Apache says, when Apaches were still on the war path they were way up in the mountains somewhere and an Apache became ill and couldn't walk anymore. So, the others left him behind in a cave. But something strange came to him from behind in the cave during the night. These strange things are supposed to have been the "mountain spirits." They were wearing strange costumes. They danced around this Apache. This Apache man moved and got healed, got up and followed his people.
They were surprised to see him and he explained how he became well. He also tried to describe the people who were dressed in these strange costumes. So, the Apache today have a dance, for four nights ever since this time.

The Mountain Spirits live in the highest mountains. Only the mountain spirit medicine men can call the spirits. They can chase away the sickness and bless the people. They dance until 1 or 3 a.m. The people are taught not to make fun of the spirits. When fun is made, illness or death came upon the people.
Nowdays, the mountain spirit medicine men won't call the spirits, because now the Apaches don't believe.

"THE BEGINNING OF THE APACHE TRIBE"

When people ask where did the Apache come from, the Apache Indian would say, Apaches have a belief in a "creator of all life" or the "giver of life." Apaches don't talk about this, but they talk about the creation of the earth or how the human being came into existence. The story begins that there was a woman who had two sons, one was the son of the sun, and the other was the son of the water. From these was created the Apaches. It is a very long story and is told to the Apache children during the long winter months. Everything in the Apache belief or everything in their usage is based on the number four (4). There are four different directions and four different colors—black, blue, white, and yellow.

"NATURE"

The Apaches have no particular sacred natural landmark, such as a mountain, river, or valley. The Apaches believe that everything in nature is sacred. Our people believe that everything in nature should be held in reverence. Apaches believe that the balance of nature should be kept.

There is a mountain in San Carlos, which is held in higher regard than the other mountains. This mountain is called the "Triplets." We are told not to disturb anything up there, something bad might happen. For example, if as a little boy, we disturb something, some say we will remain as children.

"GIFT OF THE CHANGING WOMAN"

The very true meaning of this the "Out Coming Woman", means that a girl is reaching her age of actually changing into womanhood. The age is from 12 thru 14. This is a very traditional thing that happens to various Indian tribes. As an Apache, we have our own tribal womanhood blessing dance, which we call "Out Coming Dance" for the girls.

Apaches plan ahead of time what they want for the child before she reaches this age. This can be handled privately or with all the family and friends participating in their various ways of helping one another. At first, you choose your medicine man who you want to conduct the ceremonies for you. The family and close relatives decide on this carefully, too, because in choosing the Godmother, the person who massages the girl for you will have to be in full respect, active, and in good health. The reason for this, is that there is a belief in an Indian way that whoever the person you choose, the girl will follow in the same foot steps. So, usually the people who are sponsoring the following, plan for their daughter way ahead of time. It means a lot of effort and money.
But the people help one another and get the ceremony done. Then, comes the exchanging of the food, between you and your godparents to-be. Usually the girl's parents take the food to the godmother first, and then she returns the food to her goddaughter to-be. On the third day, the early "Sunrise Dance" begins. It starts early in the morning around 6 or 7 a.m. or rather before the sunrise. After a long dance, the godmother massages the girl. That night, there is a dance right before the following day which is when the godfather blesses the goddaughter. That night the "Mountain Spirit Dance" is performed, because they will be the main ones to do the "Grinned Corn Dance" blessing with the godfather. This is the day the celebration ends. But, for four days later there is another prayer said for the girl to remove the traditional things she had received on the very first day of the sweat bath. This is just a small sample of the "Sunrise Dance" or "Out Coming Dance" for the Apache girls.

"SAN CARLOS"

During and following the Civil War, raids increased sharply and the army had no place to put the Apaches who were rounded up. In 1870, a reservation was proposed to contain them. The San Carlos Reservation was created by Executive Order on December 14, 1872 and unsuccessful efforts were made to settle the scattered bands thereon. In 1874, the control of the reservation passed from the War Department to the Indian Bureau. Concentrated on this reservation were parts of the bands of Coyotero, Chiricahua, San Carlos, Tonto, Yuma, and Yavapai, or Mohave Apaches.

"THE OWL AND THE TURKEY"

The old owl was hungry and he told his wife that he was going hunting. So, he started off and he found one turkey. He told the turkey to go back to the owl's wife and tell her that her husband told the turkey that she was to boil him and prepare him for supper. So, the turkey went off to see the owl's wife and when the old owl got home there was only feathers. He became mad and he went to get some more turkeys. He took a big basket and he saw a lot of turkeys. He told them to sit in the basket. They started back home with the turkeys. The turkeys told the owl to go under the tree. The turkeys were climbing up the tree one by one and when he got home all the turkeys were gone, only turkey droppings were left. He started to go get some more turkeys and he found the one he got the first time. He took the turkey home and got the water all ready to boil. The owl told the turkey to get a flat rock and a round rock. So, the turkey went crying, looking for it. Then he found one and he saw a horn toad and the horn toad said, "Why are you crying cousin?" "The owl told me to find a flat rock and a round rock so that he could grind my bones and eat me up—every part of me." The horn toad said, "Take me to him and tell him here are the stones. The old owl is afraid of me. He will start running. When he runs, shoot him with the bow and arrow. Tell the arrow to follow him wherever he goes." So, the turkey went back to the old owl and said "Here is your rock." The owl saw the horn toad and became afraid and started running. The turkey pulled the line way back and let the arrow fly after the owl. The turkey said, "Go wherever he goes." And it did. The owl said "I have never seen an arrow like it before." He ran behind trees and down hills, where he saw a wall with a hole in it. He went in there and the arrow got him and he died.

"THE COYOTE AND SKUNK"

There was a coyote who lied to everyone. He was mean and he liked to steal. Everyone wanted to get rid of him. Everyone hated him. One day he met a skunk so he said, "You will be my friend," and he said, "Don't go away from me, you'll be my friend all the time." Then they made a plan. The coyote told the skunk, "I'll be lying down by the river acting like I'm dead. Then they will pick me up and they will say let's have a celebration, because the coyote is is dead. When they celebrate, you will urinate in their eyes and then I'll get a club and knock them in their heads." The skunk and the coyote killed all the animals and they made a fire and they put the animals in the fire. They cooked them and then they had a race around the world, but the coyote just went halfway and went back and ate all the animals.

"APACHE KID"

The Apache Kid was one of the famous Apaches from our reservation. He killed many men. One example is the battle which took place near Miami, Arizona, now called Bloody Tanks. He raided and stole many horses which were very important to the Apache people. Finally, the Apache Kid was captured and was taken away. He killed many soldiers on his way back to his people. The Apache Kid fought for his people. He went to Mexico, because there was more freedom, due to the fact the soldiers were chasing him.

"GERONIMO"

When Geronimo was on the warpath, Geronimo fixed it so that morning wouldn't come too soon. He did it by singing. Once the Apaches were going to a certain place and Geronimo didn't want it to become light before he reached it. He saw the enemy while they were in a level place, and he didn't want them to spy on them. He wanted morning to break after they had climbed over a mountain, so that the enemy couldn't see them. So, Geronimo sang and the night remained for two or three hours longer.

"APACHE"

I'm proud to be an Indian or an Apache, because I like to be proud of the Apaches. I am proud because there are many stories behind the Apaches. I am proud of being an Apache because I like to hear the Apache language, also Apache stories, "Crying to the Moon" or "Sun Went Down at Night."

"INDIAN POWER"

The Apache Kid was a brave boy. When he was in jail he ran away, and then he got out. He was put into a wagon. When he was in there, there was a chain around his hands and he sang, sang and sang. He got loose and he ran off again.

"APACHE"

I'm proud to be an Apache, because if I were a white man I would never know about Apaches. I would never know about the "Mountain Spirit" and all the things Apaches do. I'm glad that my parents are Apache, because if they were not Apache I would be sad.

"APACHE"

Well, I like being an Apache, because I like the way I am. And I like my hair. I like the way the clothes are. I like the Crown Dancers, I like the way they dance and the way they dress.

Jameson Smith

"SUN RISE"

I like the sun rise, because when I wake up in the morning, I get up and go out of the house and look through the trees watching the sun rise. When I wake, and it's cold in the house I get out of the house and sit out in the sun. This way I get warm sitting in the sun.

"OLD LADY"

There is an old lady who lives
on a mountain near the skill center.
She's all alone. At night
they put an apperition on her and
she becomes frightened every night.
Her house is old,
she has to go get her water
down the hill at the tank and
she will be a lady with no children.

"DON'T TOUCH"

You are not supposed to touch the things the Crown Dancers dance with, they dance for sick people and pray that sickness goes away. They put the Crown Dancers things up on the mountains for a long time and if you go up there and touch them you will get a sickness.

You are not supposed to laugh at them or throw rocks at them;

If you do these things you will become crazy and it won't go away;

You will just be like that.

If you get the sickness, the sickness will kill you.

If you laugh at the Crown Dancers someone will put a curse on you, and you won't live long. Even today, some people believe this.

"SMOKING"

Apaches don't want any blood around when they smoke. If there is blood on their hands, they will get it off before they smoke. If a person has a knife with blood on it, he cleans it up or puts it away before he smokes. He will have bad luck otherwise.

"PAIN"

You can burn charcoal on your arm or leg to kill pain. You do this when you have a pain all the time. Take wood and burn it to charcoal then light small pieces of it again, one about the thickness of the lead in a pencil. Blow on it until it burns at one end and moisten the other end, and the place on the arm where you are going to put it. Then stick it on. Let it burn out. Don't watch it as it burns, some do it four times around the place it hurts.

"BOYHOOD"

There was a creek deep enough for a boy to jump in.
In the fall of the year the water was frozen a little.
The creek was about a mile away. The father said, "Son get up,
and before you build a fire take everything off except your breechcloth, run to that creek,
and jump in the water. If the ice is thin enough, you jump in so it will not cut you.
"Go ahead! Jump in."

Many boys used to put water on their heads and make believe they had jumped in.
Some of the boys used to throw water over themselves before they went in,
but their parents would find out.
If a boy wouldn't do it, his father would get a whip, call the boy to him and say,
"You go over and jump in!"
So, the boy would go to escape a whipping. Afterward they would come back
soaking wet, but they were not allowed to come up to the fire.
They just had to take a covering and wrap it around themselves.

"WAR AMONG THE APACHES"

A long time ago, during the old generation, Apaches used to live on their reservation. As of now, they still do. They used to fight and fight for their land, and for the things that was wrong among them. The weapons they used were guns. They usually fought against the whites, because of their lands. They didn't want their land to be taken away from them. But Apaches still have their reservation.

"POP-OVERS"

A favorite food of today's Apaches is the "pop-over."
The "pop-over" is made of flour, salt, baking powder,
and is mixed with warm water.
Sometimes, they are made inside over the stove,
and are made outside over the open fire.
A frying pan is half filled with grease and heated.
When the grease is hot the "pop-over" is placed into the pan.
When the pop-over is brown it is taken out and is ready to eat.
Sometimes beans are put into the "pop-over" after it has been cooled.

"THE WICKIEUP"

The wickieup is the name of the housing which our people, the Apache, used to live in.

It is built with cottonwood poles, then it's covered with cottonwood branches. After all the branches are placed or tied around the wickieup, then the top of the wickieup was covered with an animal skin, to keep the rain from coming in.

Inside the wickieup, a fire was built in the middle and people used to sleep on Johnson Grass which was used as a mattress, blankets were made from animal skins.

"HOW APACHE MEN WEAR THEIR CLOTHES"

A long time ago, Apaches wore white clothes to protect them from the sun. They wore headbands, because they had long hair. Their moccasins were like those of the "Mountain Spirits." They didn't wear white pants, only white shirts.

"THE CAMPDRESS"

The campdress is the traditional dress of today's Apache women. Before cotton the campdress was made by hand from either buckskins or wool. The campdress was made in a long and full fashion to protect the women from the sun and cold. It was and still is worn in the "Sunrise Dance." The campdress is very important to Apache women of today, because of the traditional and cultural aspects. Today, the campdress is made of either cotton or silk, and is worn by Apache women of all ages. In the past Apache women used beads, turquoise or peridot to decorate their beautiful dresses. The turquoise and peridots are stones which were found in the Apache country of Arizona, New Mexico and Old Mexico. Headbands were also worn by both Apache men and women.

VOCABULARY

I	shii''
Hello	dago te'
Boy	ish kii'n
Girl	na ali'n
Apache	nnee
White boy	enau ish kii'n
White girl	e nau naali'n
Thank you	a hi'ae
Crown dance	gan
Sky	yaa kós
Brother (my)	shi na ge' or shi kisi'n
Sister (my)	shi de zhe' or shi de
I'm going home	gowa yú na' di' sa'
I'm hungry	shina' se' li'
Be quiet	n' chád!
Water	tu
House	gowa
Food	i dún
Cold water	tu si kúzi
I'm lonesome	chi' na sili'
White man	e nau
Yes	ha' oh